

MR1683-693

Serial Number: 10/725,119

Response to Office Action Dated 16 June 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This case has been carefully reviewed and analyzed in view of the Official Action dated 16 June 2005. Responsive to the rejections made in the Official Action, Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to clarify the combination of elements which form the invention of the subject Patent Application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Chiang, U.S. Patent Application Publication 2004/0213959.

Before discussing the prior art relied upon by the Examiner, it is believed beneficial to first briefly review the structure of the invention of the subject Patent Application, as now claimed. The invention of the subject Patent Application is directed to a rubber sheet with a cloth surface. The combination includes a rubber layer and a cloth layer fully disposed on one side of the rubber layer. The cloth layer has been previously printed with patterns. The rubber layer and the cloth layer are combined by thermal compression bonding. The combination further includes a waterproof layer formed over the cloth layer to sandwich the cloth layer between the waterproof layer and the rubber layer. The waterproof layer prevents the cloth layer from absorbing water and thereby assures the adherence of the rubber layer to the cloth layer.

The Chiang reference discloses a textile fabric wherein the fabric layer 10 has a front side 102 and a back side 104. The fabric layer 10 is bonded to a back

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coating layer 30 formed of a plastic material. The backside 104 of fabric layer 10 is bonded to the side 302 of the layer 30, by means of an optional bonding layer 20 disposed therebetween. While the back coating layer 30, with or without the bonding layer 20 may be considered equivalent to Applicant's rubber layer, the reference neither discloses nor suggests a waterproof layer formed over the cloth layer to sandwich the cloth layer between the waterproof layer and the rubber layer as now claimed.

Still further, as now clearly defined in Claim 2, impressions are formed in the rubber layer during the thermal compression bonding process which forms a surface having an irregular contour, as shown in Fig. 2. Thus, the cloth layer being bonded to the regular surface likewise is formed with an irregular surface contour, as is the overlaying waterproof layer, which is also clearly shown in Fig. 2. The irregular surface contour gives the combination the appearance of having a grain, which is particularly desirable for materials being utilized to manufacture shoes and luggage. Nowhere does the Chiang reference disclose or suggest the formation of impressions in the back coating layer 30 into which the fabric layer 10 is disposed.

Therefore, as the Chiang reference fails to disclose or suggest the combination of elements which are defined in both Claims 1 and 2, the reference cannot make obvious the invention of the subject Patent Application, as now claimed.

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For all the foregoing reasons, it is now believed that the subject Patent Application has been placed in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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For: ROSENBERG, KLEIN & LEE


David I. KleinDate: 9/16/2005